EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20408

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES

FROM: **Jeffrey D. Zients**
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SUBJECT: Managing Government Records Directive

On November 28, 2011, President Obama signed the Presidential Memorandum – Managing Government Records. This memorandum marked the beginning of an Executive Branch-wide effort to reform records management policies and practices and to develop a 21st-century framework for the management of Government records. The expected benefits of this effort include:

- improved performance and promotion of openness and accountability by better documenting agency actions and decisions;
- further identification and transfer to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) of the permanently valuable historical records through which future generations will understand and learn from our actions and decisions; and
- assistance to executive departments and agencies (referred to collectively as agencies) in minimizing costs and operating more efficiently.

Records are the foundation of open government, supporting the principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration. Well-managed records can be used to assess the impact of programs, to improve business processes, and to share knowledge across the Government. Records protect the rights and interests of people, and hold officials accountable for their actions. Permanent records document our nation's history.

This Directive creates a robust records management framework that complies with statutes and regulations to achieve the benefits outlined in the Presidential Memorandum. This Directive was informed by agency reports submitted pursuant to Sec. 2 (b) of the Presidential Memorandum and feedback from consultations with agencies, interagency groups, and public stakeholders.

This Directive requires that to the fullest extent possible, agencies eliminate paper and use electronic recordkeeping. It is applicable to all executive agencies and to all records, without regard to security classification or any other restriction.

This Directive also identifies specific actions that will be taken by NARA, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to support agency records management programs. In addition, NARA will undertake a review to update relevant portions of the Code of Federal Regulations to take into account the provisions of this Directive.

Attachment

Part I.

Federal agencies shall work toward two central goals.

Goal 1: Require Electronic Recordkeeping to Ensure Transparency, Efficiency, and Accountability

To promote openness and accountability and reduce costs in the long term, the Federal Government should commit immediately to the transition to a digital government. Agencies must meet the following targets:

1.1 *By 2019, Federal agencies will manage all permanent electronic records in an electronic format*

By December 31, 2019, all permanent electronic records in Federal agencies will be managed electronically to the fullest extent possible for eventual transfer and accessioning by NARA in an electronic format. By December 31, 2013, each agency will develop and begin to implement plans to achieve this transition. Agencies should also consider the benefits of digitizing permanent records created in hard-copy format or other analog formats (e.g., microfiche, microfilm, analog video, analog audio).

1.2 *By 2016, Federal agencies will manage both permanent and temporary email records in an accessible electronic format*

By December 31, 2016, Federal agencies must manage all email records in an electronic format. Email records must be retained in an appropriate electronic system that supports records management and litigation requirements (which may include preservation-in-place models), including the capability to identify, retrieve, and retain the records for as long as they are needed. Beginning one year after issuance of this Directive, each agency must report annually to OMB and NARA the status of its progress toward this goal.

Goal 2: Demonstrate Compliance with Federal Records Management Statutes and Regulations

The Federal Government should commit to manage more effectively all records consistent with Federal statutes and regulations and professional standards. Agencies must meet the following requirements:

2.1 *Agencies Must Designate a Senior Agency Official (SAO)*

The Presidential Memorandum previously required all agencies to designate a Senior Agency Official (SAO) to oversee a review of their records management program. This Directive also requires agencies to designate an SAO, but with broader agency-wide responsibilities with respect to records management. By November 15, 2012, each agency will name it's SAO, and by November 15th of each subsequent year, all agencies will reaffirm or name any new SAO. The SAO is responsible for coordinating with the

Agency Records Officer and appropriate agency officials to ensure the agency's compliance with records management statutes and regulations.

The SAO is a senior official at the Assistant Secretary level or its equivalent who has direct responsibility for ensuring that the department or agency efficiently and appropriately complies with all applicable records management statutes, regulations, and NARA policy, and the requirements of this Directive. The SAO must be located within the organization so as to make adjustments to agency practices, personnel, and funding as may be necessary to ensure compliance and support the business needs of the department or agency.

2.2 *SAO Shall Ensure that Permanent Records are Identified for Transfer and Reported to NARA*

By December 31, 2013, the SAO shall ensure permanent records that have been in existence for more than 30 years are identified for transfer and reported to NARA.

2.3 *Agency Records Officers Must Obtain NARA Certificate of Federal Records Management Training*

By December 31, 2014, the designated Agency Records Officer for each agency must hold the NARA certificate of Federal Records Management Training. New incumbents must possess the certificate within one year of assuming the position of Agency Records Officer. Agency Records Officers are generally responsible for overseeing the day to day agency recordkeeping requirements outlined in 36 CFR 1222.22, Subpart B.

2.4 *Agencies Must Establish Records Management Training*

By December 31, 2014, all Federal agencies must establish a method to inform all employees of their records management responsibilities in law and policy, and develop suitable records management training for appropriate staff.

2.5 *SAO Shall Ensure that Records are Scheduled*

By December 31, 2016, the SAO shall work with the Agency Records Officer to ensure records schedules have been submitted to NARA for all existing paper and other non-electronic records. To facilitate this goal, the Agency Records Officer will work with NARA to identify all unscheduled records, by December 31, 2013. This should include all records stored at NARA and at agencies' records storage facilities that have not yet been properly scheduled.

Part II.

NARA and other agencies (OMB and OPM) will take the following actions to assist agencies in meeting the two central goals of this Directive.

Section A: Require Electronic Recordkeeping to Ensure Transparency, Efficiency, and Accountability

A1 ***Revise NARA transfer guidance for permanent electronic records***

By December 31, 2013, NARA will complete, and make available, revised guidance, including metadata requirements, for transferring permanent electronic records, to include additional sustainable formats commonly used to meet agency business needs. NARA will update this guidance regularly as required to stay current with technology changes.

A2 ***Create new email guidance***

By December 31, 2013, NARA will issue new guidance that describes methods for managing, disposing, and transferring email.

A3 ***Investigate and stimulate applied research in automated technologies to reduce the burden of records management responsibilities***

A3.1 NARA, the Federal Chief Information Officers Council and the Federal Records Council will work with private industry and other stakeholders to produce economically viable automated records management solutions. By December 31, 2013, NARA will produce a comprehensive plan in collaboration with its stakeholders to describe suitable approaches for the automated management of email, social media, and other types of digital record content, including advanced search techniques. The plan will detail expected outcomes and outline potential associated risks.

A3.2 By December 31, 2014, the Federal Chief Information Officers Council, and the Federal Records Council, working with NARA, will obtain external involvement for the development of open source records management solutions.

A4 ***Embed records management requirements into cloud architectures and other Federal IT systems and commercially-available products***

A4.1 By December 31, 2013, NARA will incorporate into existing reporting requirements an annual agency update on new cloud initiatives, including a description of how each new initiative meets Federal Records Act obligations and the goals outlined in this Directive. For the initial report the agency will identify any existing use of cloud services or storage, and the date of implementation.

A4.2 By the next revision of OMB Circular A-130, OMB will update A-130 to explicitly require that agencies must incorporate records management requirements when moving to cloud-based services or storage solutions.

A5 ***Evaluate the feasibility for secure "data at rest" storage and management services for Federal agency-owned electronic records***

By December 31, 2013, NARA will determine the feasibility of establishing a secure cloud-based service to store and manage unclassified electronic records on behalf of agencies. This basic, shared service will adhere to NARA records management regulations and provide standards and tools to preserve records and make them accessible within their originating agency until NARA performs disposition.

Section B: Create a Robust Records Management Framework that Demonstrates Compliance with Federal Statutes and Regulations and Promotes Partnerships

B1 ***The Archivist of the United States will convene the first of periodic meetings of all Senior Agency Officials***

By December 31, 2012, the Archivist of the United States will convene the first of periodic meetings of all SAOs to discuss progress in implementation of this Directive; agency Federal records management responsibilities; and partnerships for improving records management in the Federal Government. Additionally, NARA will complete a review of all of its records management reporting requirements by December 31, 2012, and produce a report template for a single annual report that each SAO will send to the Chief Records Officer for the U.S. Government commencing on October 1, 2013.

B2 ***Create a Community of Interest to solve records management challenges***

By December 31, 2013, NARA, in cooperation with the Federal Chief Information Officers Council, the Federal Records Council, and other Government-wide councils that express interest, will establish a Community of Interest (COI) to bring together leaders from the information technology, legal counsel, and records management communities to solve specific records management challenges. The COI will develop and propose guidance, share information, create training, and identify tools that support electronic records management.

B3 ***Establish a formal records management occupational series***

By December 31, 2013, OPM will establish a formal records management occupational series to elevate records management roles, responsibilities, and skill sets for agency records officers and other records professionals.

B4 ***Continue to improve the effectiveness of Federal records management programs through analytical tools and enhanced NARA oversight***

By December 31, 2013, NARA will identify a government-wide analytical tool to evaluate the effectiveness of records management programs. While continuing to conduct assessments, inspections, and studies of agency records management programs, NARA expects that a tool or similar analytical approach will help NARA and the agencies to measure program compliance more effectively, assess risks, and aid in agency decision-making. The use of a new analytical tool in these ongoing activities will identify issues that undermine effective agency records management programs as well as highlight the best practices that will inform agency-specific or government-wide opportunities for improvement.

Section C: Improve NARA Processes to Serve Agency Needs

C1 ***Improve the Current Request for Records Disposition Authority Process***

By December 31, 2015, NARA will improve the current Request for Records Disposition Authority process. Consistent with current Federal records management statutes, or with changes to existing statutes (if required), NARA will also develop criteria that agencies can apply to the scheduling, appraisal, and overall management of temporary records that can be effectively monitored with appropriate NARA oversight.

C2 ***Overhaul the General Records Schedules***

By December 31, 2017, to reduce the need for unique records schedules submitted for approval to the Archivist, NARA, in consultation with appropriate oversight agencies, will make substantive changes to the General Records Schedules (GRS). These significant changes will include, combining the records series into more appropriate aggregations for easier disposition action by agencies, and expanding the number of permanent records series in the GRS to reduce the scheduling and appraisal burden on agencies.